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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

EDGAR P. HARNEY BOARD OF DIRECTORS RESPONDS TO DEFAMING ALLEGATIONS BY FORMER PRINCIPAL

NEW ORLEANS—The Edgar P. Harney School Board says the public has been misguided, and its reputation has been tarnished by baseless allegations made by Ashonta Wyatt, a former principal who was let go within ninety days of being on the job.

Edgar P. Harney School Board President Charles J. Southall III, said “it didn’t take long for us to understand why former Principal Wyatt was no longer employed at two other local schools.” Southall added, “It’s truly shameful that Wyatt’s claims of being illegally fired and allegations of financial mis-management has taken the focus off of the hardworking staff and parents who are working diligently together to improve the educational experience of the nearly 300 students enrolled under our care.”

LOUISIANA IS AN AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT STATE:

Unless otherwise agreed, either party to an oral employment-at-will agreement may terminate the employment relationship for any reason which is not contrary to law.

“This former disgruntled principal did not have a contract with the school. She could have easily moved on rather than attempting to defame the character of a voluntary board that was not going to give her the autonomy she sought to run the school without being accountable to the School’s governing body,” added Southall.

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He went on to say, “It’s disturbing that her anger has led to her petitioning the Orleans Parish Civil District Court for a permanent injunction restricting members of the school's governing board from functioning. Wyatt’s earlier attempt to file a temporary restraining order against the board was denied by the courts.”

The Orleans Parish School Board recently commissioned a forensic audit conducted by the prestigious Postlethwaite & Netterville CPA Firm on Edgar P. Harney School. “We have forwarded the report to Bruno & Tervalon LLP, the independent auditor that was approved by the State of Louisiana to conduct the school’s annual audit and has done so for several years. To my knowledge that audit revealed no major irregularities or findings,” added Southall.

The School’s legal counsel, Attorney Kenya Rounds said the board looks forward to having its day in court and he’s confident the board will have a favorable outcome.

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